

PARKS, RECREATION & FORESTRY BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, April 12, 2022

1. Call to order by Beth Arneberg at 6:00 p.m.
Roll Call: Members Present: Audrey Stowell, Travis Siebert, Beth Arneberg, Justin Agnew, and Carmen Muenich
Absent: Christopher Gilliam and John Abbe
Staff present: John Jimenez
2. Approval of Minutes: March 8, 2022. **Motion by Siebert/Agnew to approve minutes of March 8, 2022. Motion passed.**
3. Personal Appearances by Citizens. None.
4. Discuss/Consider Special Event Applications. John J. presents special event applications for Valley Vineyard Party in the Park at Riverfront and Blues Fest at Riverfront. Both are repeat events. Blues Fest is on the agenda for later, so application will be discussed and reviewed at that time. **Motion from Siebert/Arneberg to approve special event application for Valley Vineyard for Party in the Park as presented. Motion passed.**

John Abbe arrives.

5. Discuss/Consider
 - a. Committing to matching funds for DNR Grant. Chris Silewski gives presentation regarding DNR grants for Flag Hill project. After discussion with the DNR, the recommendation is for one grant submittal to cover both the Lawcon Grant and the Stewardship Grant. The Lawcon Grant is for \$150,000, and the Stewardship Grant is for \$350,000. Both are matching funds. Grant items would include playgrounds, accessible walks, new parking lot, extending trails/walks, community plaza, new timber stairs, elevated boardwalk and paved walks. There are funds available to cover some of the matching funds; \$200,000 would still need to be raised. The grant would be submitted in May. **Motion by Muenich/Siebert to submit grant as presented. Motion passed.**
 - b. Birth to 3, Playground Communication Initiative. John J. states this is an initiative to put a communication board by the TTM playground for the purpose of improving communication. Presenter was unable to make meeting. Revisit next month.
 - c. Welcome Center UWEC Exhibit Proposal. Cherylane Jimenez Frei, Ph.D. of UWEC presents regarding Welcome Center Exhibit proposal. Dr. Frei's class of Public History students will be graduating in May. The students give presentation of exhibit through six themes meant to reflect Chippewa Falls' place in local and national history. Students presented their ideas on audience and engagement of children including teenagers, means of expression, the visitor experience, and learning outcomes. Some of the

Christopher Gilliam arrives.

ideas were a magnetic table, wall maps, flip booklet, involvement through social medial activities, such as an Instagram zone or TikTok challenges. All exhibits would be movable for events. Gilliam opposes any TikTok activities. Discussion regarding maintenance, changing of exhibits and upkeep; students were aware of this and their ideas are self-sustaining. Applying to National Register of Historic Places was discussed as a thought for the future; possibly a future class project. **Motion by Siebert/Arneberg to move funds up to \$8,000.00 for exhibits in the Welcome Center as presented. Motion passed.** Dr. Frei encourages us to advise her of any individuals willing to donate their woodworking skills.

- d. Riverfront Blues Fest (Pete and Steve). The Special Event application for Blues Festival to be held June 17 & 18. Pete and Steve of Blues Fest are present and request additional electrical posts be installed. They have found this to be something that would be very useful during their event and feel it would be beneficial for any other events as well. John J. has contacted an electric company to see what exactly is involved. Discussed disturbance to the area, scope of project, cost, future flooding, and other items. Gilliam has received questions/complaints about blocking off trails by the river. The reason for that is insurance, sneak ins, and view. **Motion by Gilliam/Agnew to approve special event application as presented. Motion passed.** Electrical posts will be addressed later. **Motion amended by Muenich/Abbe to allow John Jimenez as Director to use his judgment with regard to installing additional electrical posts at Riverfront Park. Motion passed.**
- f. Possible Zoo Tour Rates and Fundraising. Cynthia Valentino proposes selling keychains and tumblers to raise funds for a large animal scale. After discussion, John J. will ask Friends of Irvine Zoo for the funds to purchase the scale, which has an approximate cost of \$1,200. Discussion regarding whether to sell the keychains and tumblers to raise funds to be used for other purposes. **Motion by Siebert/Gilliam to authorize John J. to request \$2,000 to be used toward scale and purchase of souvenirs to be sold and profit to return to zoo. Motion passed.** If the souvenirs is outside the scope of Friends, then John J. will fund. Tours of the zoo is also discussed. Tours provide a small, personal, unique experience; they are behind the scenes, given by park staff and last about 45 minutes. Discussed whether we should be charging for these tours as it does take staff away from their other duties. Discussion included but was not limited to having a community day of tours, giving tours during Pure Water Dates, charging vs. donations, different pricing for schools. The Board approves concept and will review later. For now, tours open to non-profit, field trips, schools at reasonable rate. John J. states they plan to start Zookeeper Talks at specific times of the day.

7:55pm Audrey Stowell left - Beth Arneberg took over notes

- e. Possible Farmers Market Expansion. Carmen dislikes the idea, thinks it will be too much wear and tear on grass in Riverfront. Also parking is more of an issue. **Motion by Muenich/Abbe to not approve moving the Farmer's Market to Riverfront at this time.** Roll call vote: Muenich - yes, Abbe - yes, Justin - yes, Siebert - no, Gilliam - no, Arneberg - yes. Motion passed 4-2.
 - g. Recreation Report. Soccer has 240 kids signed up. Activity Guide will have a limited printing. Jr. Zookeeper program going well! 25% of earnings going back to Irvine Park Zoo. Nine lifeguards confirmed for upcoming pool season. Incentive program being discussed.
 - h. Director Report. On April 28th, the park will be fully staffed after two recent hires. John gave a shout-out to all his staff - Ashley & Jack and park staff - all doing well! Rivers Journey statue finally moving forward. Should be installed relatively soon in Riverfront Park. Welcome Center - space being made more functional for Olson's. Tuesday, May 3rd at 1:00pm there will be a ribbon cutting for the Joas Family Pavilion at Flag Hill. All are invited. Erickson Park - Mike Dahlby has headed up an effort to rid it of invasive species.
6. Approve Claims. **Motion by Seifert/Abbe to approve claims of \$44,433.48. Motion passed.**
7. Park Board Members' Concerns or Comments. Carmen discussed numerous items as this is his last park board meeting. Thorpe Foundation has money that must be used this year or designated for a project in the near future. Jefferson Pillars is one of the projects and their wish is to keep them historically accurate. Band Shell - needs a historical marker - making sure it is known it was built in memory of the veterans of the Great War. Marshall Park - master plan needs updating. Signage - wayfinding needs to be completed in and outside of the parks. Brochures - need upgrading (in the works according to John). Carmen will still be a trustee with the Thorpe Foundation. Flag Hill Plaza (next phase) - would like a recognition marker for the Thorpe Foundation. 2022 - \$50,000 designated for Flag Hill. Bear Den Road - possible location for picnic table in old bear den spot.
- Beth thanks Carmen for his years of service to the City of Chippewa Falls and the Park Board. He will be missed
8. Adjournment. **Motion by Muenich/Arneberg to adjourn at 8:30 pm. Motion passed.**

Submitted by:
Audrey Stowell, Secretary
Beth Arneberg, President